

U.S. CONSULATE
GENERAL IN
THESSALONIKI



DID YOU KNOW :

The recycling symbol you see today with three arrows in the triangle shape was designed in 1970 as part of a contest sponsored by the Container Corporation of America (CCA). As a special event for the original Earth Day in 1970 (started by John Mc Connell), CCA conducted a contest for graphic art students to design a symbol representing paper recycling. The winning entry was submitted by Gary Dean Anderson, a 5-year architecture student at the University of Southern California at Los Angeles.

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by Liana Gouta

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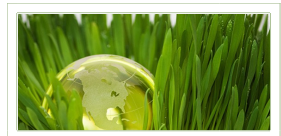
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Earth Day 2009



Earth Day, celebrated on April 22, marks a day of awareness for the Earth's environment. Earth Day is currently celebrated by more than 500 million people around the world, including national governments in 175 countries. Founded by Senator Gaylord Nelson in 1970, Earth Day began as a grassroots campaign for the environment, spreading from coast-to-coast across university campuses in the United States. Earth Day is not a national holiday in any country and does not have a central organization. Past Earth Days have led to movements and protests, paving the way for more recycling and new regulations concerning the environment. Every year, several different programs

and events are organized around the world on Earth Day. This year, the U.S. Consulate in Thessaloniki commemorated Earth Day by hosting a conference call between the United States,

the Balkans, and the Middle East concerning water conservation, an increasingly important issue around the world.

In the image below: Earth Day Teleconference



Earth Hour

On March 28, 2009 over 88 countries and more than 4,000 cities around the world shut off their non-essential lights and other electrical appliances from 20:00 to 21:00 for Earth Hour. This event organized by the World Wildlife Foundation aims to bring awareness to climate change. In 2007, WWF and the Sydney Morning Herald

inaugurated Earth Hour, with 2.2 million participants in Sydney, Australia. Since then, involvement has increased significantly, with new contributors such as Greece, who ranked second in participation with 484 cities and towns, or 11.2 million people. This resulted in the decrease of 484 MWh, a decrease of 43.15 Wh per capita. The U.S. Consulate in



Thessaloniki did its part by encouraging its staff and employs to turn off lights and electronics during this event.



Going Greener

In just a few years big changes have taken place and reversals in zeitgeists and perceptions so that discussions regarding the environment that used to be considered a little bit romantic or activist and at any rate in the margins or even competitive to development now are in the epicenter of economy, development and politics.

This is simply because the consequences of the climate change are the biggest threat that humanity faces today. Discussions regarding the environment are no longer local but global in nature. And instead of an

"impediment for development" are now considered a "requirement for development". New terms have been added in our daily life such as the "carbon footprint," the environmental consequences on the "life cycle" and the principle that "the polluter pays."

We all ought to realize the changes occurring around us, to synchronize our pace with the new realities and through these to see the opportunities for a new model of lifestyle and development. Information certainly plays a key role to such a transition, as well as increasing awareness among

all authorities and civilians of all ages and especially the children.

by Liana Gouta

**Chemical Engineer
Consultant of Energy, Environment
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<http://thessaloniki.usconsulate.gov>

Spotlight :



AMERICAN FARM SCHOOL
Thessaloniki Greece

The American Farm School in Thessaloniki is a private, non-profit educational institution founded in 1904 to serve the rural population of Greece and the Balkans. Major divisions include the Secondary School, the Dimitris Perrotis College, the department of Lifelong Learning, and a cultural exchange program for U.S. and international high school students known as Greek Summer.

The founder, Dr. John Henry House, expressed the School's commitment to a sustainable environment that rings true to

this day, "I believe in a permanent agriculture, a soil that grows richer, rather than poorer, from year to year. I believe in living not for self, but for others, so that future generations will not suffer on account of my farming methods."

More than a century later, the American Farm School addresses pressing environmental concerns on many fronts. Students and staff who reside on campus recycle paper, glass, aluminum and plastic with the help of special bins and collection by a private recycling company. Students use mechanical insect traps to control pests in their greenhouse crops of tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, etc., instead of chemical pesticides of any kind. Through a research grant from the Athens-based Bodossaki Foundation, wastewater from the farming operation is purified



Insect Traps

and reused with the help of reed beds grown in cement cylinders around ponds located on the Educational Farm. And, in a well known program continued since 1922, drought resistant olive trees, umbrella pines, oleanders and bay trees are planted by students on the annual Memorial Tree Planting Day. Friends of the American Farm School and members of the Thessaloniki and Athens public honor loved ones who have passed away by joining the students in planting trees in their loved ones' memory.

By Dr. William McGrew



Reed Bed Technology

Q & A with the CG

How is the new administration planning to address climate change?



The United States recognizes that climate change is a clear and present danger that threatens the entire world. We are therefore committed to protecting the environment and are actively fighting against climate change, with deeds not just words. It is not enough to sign an agreement or promise to reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. Countries must be willing and able to implement their commitments, and the agreement must be realistic and include all the countries that produce large amounts of emissions. Many countries ratified the Kyoto Protocol but did not implement it. Others, like the United States, did not sign it

because it did not include developing countries such as China and India, which are among the world's largest emitters. Furthermore, according to the most recent United Nations data on greenhouse gas emissions, the United States has achieved about the same level of reductions in emissions as European Union countries that ratified the Kyoto Protocol. Of course, the United States and Europe can and should do better. That is why the United States is leading efforts to reach a new agreement on global warming that will require all countries, including India and China, to reduce their emissions. On April 26-

28, the United States and 15 other "major economies" that together account for about 75 percent of global emissions met at the State Department in Washington to discuss how to reach a new, better agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol when it expires in 2012. The United States is also "putting its money where its mouth is" by investing billions of dollars in new technologies that will lower greenhouse gas emissions, such as renewable energy. As President Obama said earlier this month, "America must do more. Europe must do more. China and India must do more. Rolling back the tide of

a warming planet is a responsibility that we have to ourselves, to our children, and all of those who will inherit God's creation long after we are gone. So let us meet that responsibility together." The Consulate supports Thessaloniki Friends of the Environment and other initiatives to protect our world. If you would like to join our efforts, please visit our [website](#) or [Facebook fan page](#).

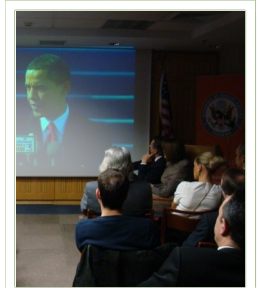
Presidential Inauguration celebrated at U.S. Consulate General, Thessaloniki



On January 20, the U.S. Consulate General in Thessaloniki and the HJ3 "Alexander the Great" Chapter of AHEPA [American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association] hosted local officials, Greek-Americans, students, academics and media at an event high-

lighting the inauguration ceremony of President Barack Obama. AmConGen showed live television coverage from Washington D.C. of the inauguration ceremony. AHEPA HELLAS – CYPRUS Governor Dr. Alfred Barich spoke of a new era in American politics,

Dr. Karvounarakis, a Greek-American political scientist discussed the importance of the 2008 election in America's history, and CG Yee thanked Greece for the democratic tradition on which America's political system is based.



Registration for American Citizens!

Did you know that American citizens living or traveling overseas can and should register with the local U.S. embassy or consulate where they are staying? Here are few more questions and answers on the subject . . . 1) Q. Who should register with Consulate Thessaloniki? A. All American citizens who live or are visiting in northern Greece should register. It is especially important if you plan to stay in Greece for

more than a month. 2) Q. Why should I register? A. Your registration provides us with information on how we can contact you in case of emergency and helps us assist you in the case such an emergency. 3) Q. How do I register? A. It's easy. You can register online at the State Department web page. Here's the link - <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> - or you can come by

the consulate to register in person by filling out a short form. 4) Q. What about privacy? A. Don't worry. In accordance with the Privacy Act, personal information including information about your whereabouts may not be released without your written authorization. So that's the story. If you are an American citizen reading this and have not registered yet, "drop by" either online or come to see us at

the consulate in Thessaloniki. We are always happy to see you.



By Bob King
U.S. Consul

Transatlantic Studies Seminars

Students discuss values and interests, civil rights

On March 16-17, AmConGen organized a 2day seminar on "Transatlantic Relations: A Community of Values and Interests" in cooperation with the Law Faculty of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. More than 60 university students attended the seminar and heard about the influence of European enlightenment philosophy on America's founding fathers and current topics in U.S.-EU cooperation,

the global financial crisis and how to deal with it, federalism and constitutionalism, EU enlargement and U.S. views of Europe. On April 2-4, AmConGen organized a three-day seminar on "Civil Rights in the U.S. and Europe" in cooperation with the University of Macedonia. More than 80 university students had the opportunity to discuss with two distinguished American professors, Dr. David Goldfield and Dr. John

Dean, the evolution of civil rights in America, from emancipation to the election of President Obama. Greek academics presented the European approach in protecting human rights, minorities and immigrants in the European Union. Students and faculty discussed the differences and similarities between the American and European experiences, as well as the role of student movements in propelling

change in society.

The seminars were the latest in a series of seminars that AmConGen has organized every year for the last decade on American history, politics, economics and culture.



Seminar Attendees

Black History Month



Consul King Discusses Black History Month with local high school

During the month of February, the U.S. Consulate General in Thessaloniki observed Black History

Month with a number of events including film showings at local high-schools, lectures at the American Corners of Xanthi and Veria and lectures by the biographer and author Evelyn White, who spoke on her experience as the biographer of acclaimed author Alice Walker, as well as on the origins of the celebration of Black History Month. Ms. White spoke to stu-

dents at Anatolia College about the election of U.S. President Barack Obama and its significance for the United States and the world. At Aristotle University she described her own experience of being a beneficiary of the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. especially as doors to education were opened, as well as about her work as the official biographer of Alice Walker.

Upcoming Events

1. **May 8-9:** Consulate supports participation of U.S. artist Joel Martinez at the Battle of the Year hip hop and break dance festival
2. **May 15:** Lecture on "Climate Change - international technology transfer and finance issues" at the Balkan Environment Center with Dr. Joanna Lewis, Georgetown university
3. **June 5:** US Consulate observes World Environment Day
4. **July 2:** Consulate Celebrates the 233rd Independence Day. Event is by Invitation only



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On FaceBook —U.S. Consulate General Thessaloniki